THE

Plague Checkt;

OR,

PIETY will either Prevent

OR

Alter the Property of the PLAGUE

HELD FORTH,

Together with ſundry other Things

in a Letter, Written by a Friend, to ſundry of his godly Friends and Acquaintance, Pouring out himſelf thereby into their Boſomes, and opening his Heart unto them; Partly in a Parænetical and Perſwaſory way; Partly in a Corroborating and Conſolatory way, with reſpect to the Preſent Times and Providences; Wherein the Great and Terrible God, hath appeared in ſome what a Dreadfull manner, both by Land and Sea; and by Terrible Things in Righteouſneſſe, hath manifeſted and made himſelf known to the ſonnes of Men, as the Lord of Hoſts; and the God that is Holy, who will be Exalted in Judgement, and Sanctified in Righteouſneſſe.

Printed by T. M. for the Authors Friends, 16

A Friend of the Authours *to the* READER.

MY Friend, if so thou art to whom these come,
Acknowledge God, the Authour of what's done;
The Instrument his servant in his hand,
Hath shew'd himself to be at his Command;
And thereunto Obedient in that he
Hath thus prepar'd, what is so good for thee;
I say prepar'd for thee, and 'tis a price
Put in thy Hand, beware and be not nice:
Here by thou mayest be help'd, Virtue to nourish;
But Vice it checks, even in its greatest flourish:
Where e're he findes it, like a man of God,
He makes due Application of the Rod,
Unto the Back, which most deserves the blow:
But if it be not minded, know, yea know,
This as another Witnesse will come in,
And be an aggravation of thy sin;
Not that it was intended for that end,
No, no, it aim'd at this, that such might mend,
And knowing their own evils might return
To God that smites, and makes his anger burn?
That he may please to spare, and eke to pitty
The miserable state of this poore Citty;
And would not let out all his Wrath,
Till us consumed quite he hath.
But in his Mercy he may give
Some an escape that they may live,
And be for Monuments of Praise,
To his most holy Name alwayes.

 Amen.

READER.

London's Lamentation

Made mostly in the language of *Jeremies* Lamentations, occasioned by the present Plague with which she is now visited, *Anno* 1665.

Her Case.

HOw doth the City solitary sit — Lam.
Of People it was full now few in it: — 1.1.
She weepeth sore i'th' Night, and so appeares — 2.
With mournfull Face, with Cheeks bedew'd with Tears
The wayes of her Assemblies do lament, — 3.
Because that few or none doe them frequent:
Her Priests do sigh, yea, they for feare do flye;
Her Virgins grieve, she takes all bitterly;
Her beauty which was great, it now is gone;
Solemnities she had, now there are none:
Her Princes and her great Ones, like the Hart, — 6.
Pursu'd by Plague, strengthlesse from her depart;
Distrest she is, her Bowels troubled are; — 20.
Her Heart is turn'd in her, thus doth it fare
Abroad the Sword bereaves, at home there's death,
Both young and old bereaved are of Breath:
Her miseries are yet without restraint;
Her Sighes are many, and her Heart is faint. — 22.

The Cauſe.

cap. 1. 8. SHee hath Rebell'd and Sinned grievouſly,
Therefore ſhe is remov'd and made to fly:
cap. 3. 42. Her Filth is in her skirts, ſo may ſhe finde
9. Her latter end, full little did ſhe minde;
cap. 2. 14. Zion of old had Prophets which did ſee
Vaine things, and fooliſh were they found to be:
Sin did not they diſcover, no not they,
So as to turn Callamity away:
Falſe Burthens they did ſee, and Viſions vent,
Cauſes of dreadfull Plague and Puniſhment;
God's fierceſt Wrath they ſorely did provoke,
And ſo they fell under his heavy ſtroke;
For ſinns of Prophets, and of Prieſts that ſhed:
The blood o'the juſt in her; and had not fed
cap. 4. 13. The Souls of thoſe committed to their care,
But rather miſcheif did for them prepare:
Gods anger did break out, and t'was his minde
16. Them to divide, no favour ſhould they finde.
Let London in this Glaſſe her Face behold,
Leaſt ſtill there dye and dye both young and old,
If ſhe with Scripture, as Gods Heifer plow
She'le read the Riddle and the cauſe ſhee'le know.

The

The Course to be taken in Order to Cure.

Will she turn queritant? Thats not the way Cap.
To appease the wrath of God, the Plagne to 3. 39.
Nay rather, let her search her wayes and turn (stay, 40.
Unto the Lord, Least that his anger burn,
And not be quench'd, nor from her turn away,
But still devoure, and waste from day to day:
Unto the Heavens let her lift her hands, 41.
Her Heart to God, who hath her in his Bands:
And say that she transgrest, Rebelled hath, 42.
And therefore God hath Plagu'd her in his wrath.
That he is Righteous, in what e're he doth,
Sinned she hath, and he is justly wroth;
Cause she hath none to plain its punishment:
For Sin she bears, it is for that shee's shent, 28,
Let her submit: keep silence unto God, 29.
Put mouth in dust, quietly bear the Rod: 19.
Remembring misery Wormwood eke and Gall, Levit.
And being kindly humbled under all: 26. 41
Such Recollection made, let her expresse Isaiah
Acceptance of her punishment learn Righteousnes, 26. 9.
Knowing withall her spiritual Plague and Sore: 1 Kin. 8. 38.
Let her return to God and Sin no more, Joh. 5
Least worse things come unto her when she shall 14.
Back-slide, return to Folly, from God fall: Ps. 85 8.
Then let her Hope, and in that Hope confesse, Lam.
It is of Gods rich Mercy that there's less 3. 22.

Then

Then utter desolation on her brought;
22, *She not consumed, wholly brought to nought:*
23. *Let her acknowledge, Gods compassions are,*
Such as doe never faile, he doth prepare
Them every morning fresh, and so makes known
His faithfulnesse, full great unto his own;
Let her make God her Portion, and then say
24. *In him my hope shall be both now and aye:*
Let her improve the experience she hath found,
For others good, and loudly let her sound
25. *To th' Honour of Gods Name, that they that seek,*
And waite for him, with lowly Hearts and meek,
Shall finde its good, because its duty, and
26. *For them his goodnesse he will still command.*
Let London *take this course, be sure God will*
Return in Mercy, make her flourish still.

The after Carriage of such, as are Preserved from, or recovered of the Plague.

LOrd thou hast greatly been provok't,
By City, Countries all:
Psal. 80. 4. Thine anger hath broke out and smoak't,
And we been made to fall.
Psal. 66. 5. Terrible have thy appearings been,
Thy Hand eke lifted up:
Psal. 75. 8. In it our Eyes have also seen
Of Wrath a deadly Cup.
Deut. 32. 41. Thy glittering Sword, thou whetted hast,
Thy Bow, eke thou hast bent;
Psa. 7. 13, 14. Thine Arrows on thy string were plac't,
On every side they went.

On

On Judgement thou haſt taken hold, Deut.
Thy Vengeance thou haſt made 32.41
To ſeize on ſuch as have been bold,
And not at all affraid,
Thee to provoke unto thy Face,
Againſt thee to Rebell:
Thy Peſtilence it did them chaſe,
And into Graves they fell;
Thouſands on our right hand did fall,
Thouſands eke on our left; Pſ.91.
But thou haſt not conſum'd us all:
A Remnant thou haſt kept,
Who trembling ſtood to ſee thy Wrath,
Thus to break forth and burn,
Not knowing but into th' ſame path
With others they may turn.
But ſome from ſtroke of Peſtilence
Wholly preſerved were:
Others who of thy ſtroke had ſenſe,
From Grave, thy Hand did reare;
Let ſuch thus ſay, with thankfull hearts,
Thy Fire Lord have we felt,
From being conſum'd are ſet apart,
Us let it try and melt.
It's meet for us to ſay to God
Chaſtiſement we have bore, Job
And having ſinn'd, have felt the rod, 34.31
Now we will ſin no more.
What yet we know not teach us Lord, 32.
And having ſinn'd before,
To this we gladly will accord;
Hence forth to ſin no more.

Thou

Pſal. 116.3 Thou Lord haſt us delivered,
From Death and deadly thrall;
Our moiſtened Eyes from Tears we ſhed,
Our ſlyding Feet from fall;
Pſal. 94.18 When we did ſay, our foot did ſlide,
We now are like to fall;
Thy goodneſſe Lord, did ſo provide,
To ſtay us up with all;
Except thou Lord hadſt been our ayde,
17. Deaths darkneſſe to diſpell;
Our Life and Soule had now been laid
Almoſt as low as Hell,
Pſal. 116.7 And now our Souls ſince you are ſafe,
Return unto your Reſt,
For largely lo, the Lord to you
His bounty hath expreſt.
9. Before the Lord, we in the Land
Of Life, will hence forth walk,
Submitting to his ruling hand;
His Laws we will not balk:
Pſal. 6.4. Among the Dead, none doth, none can,
Remember him one whit,
5. To ſing his Praiſe, there's not a man
in the Infernal Pit.
Iſaiah 38.19 The living, yea, the living ſhall
Him praiſe, and eke his Truth:
20. The Fathers to their Children all,
Shall ſhew with Heart and Mouth
The Lord was ready us to ſave,
And we our Songs will Sing:
And to his Houſe, being kept from Grave,
Our Offerings we will bring.

Amen.

THE Author of this *Letter*, hath expreſſed in one part of it, that that which doth more ſpecially concern the *Families and Perſons under the Peſtilential ſtroke* might be extracted, and by one means or other tranſmitted to them, and ſo coming in conjunction with Mr. *Baxters* papers, might through the co-operation of divine Grace, contribute ſomewhat to the promoting of their Spiritual and Eternal welfare: We to whom the *Letter* was principally intended, have judged it worthy, in the whole, to appear in Publick; hoping it will have the ſame bleſſed effect upon others, as upon our ſelves: For the Author himſelf, he is at a point, not paſſing for mans day, knowing that he who judgeth him is the Lord: If the

Letter had been circumſcribed within the compaſſe of that number to which it was principally intended, it would have pleaſed him well enough; as for others, who probably will frown upon it, and lade it with their cenſures; as he makes account they will Con him little thanks for it, ſo he is not ſo low brought, as to think himſelf beholding to them for their thanks; And ſo if it muſt out, out let it go, and thats all he hath to ſay.

C. B.

S. H, &c.

Amos 3. 8

THe Lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath ſpoken, who can but propheſie?

Micha. 6. 9. *The Lords voice cryeth unto the City, and the man of wiſdome ſhall ſee thy Name: Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.*

Prov. 11. 19. *As righteouſneſs tendeth to life, ſo he that purſueth evill, purſueth it to his own death.*

Numb. 32. 14. *Behold you are riſen up in your fathers ſtead, an increaſe of ſinfull men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord towards Iſrael.*

Numb. 32, 20, to 23. *If ye will doe according to that which the Lord hath commanded, this land ſhall be your poſſeſſion, before the Lord; but if ye will not do ſo ye have ſinned againſt the Lord, and be ſure your ſinne will finde you out.*

Levit. 26. 23, 24, 25. *If ye will not be reformed by theſe things, but will walk contrary to me, then will I alſo walk contrary to you, and will puniſh you yet ſeaven times for yours ſinnes; And I will bring a ſword upon you, that ſhall avenge the quarrell of my Covenant, and when ye are gathered together within your Cities, I will ſend the Peſtilence among you.* Read further, verſ. 40, 41, 42.

Eſay 27.

Eſay 27. 4, 5. *Fury is not in me, who would ſet the Bryers and Thornes againſt me in battell? I will go thorow them: I will burn them together, or let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me.*

Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Pſal. 116. 15. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.*

1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *Whether* Paul, *or* Apollo, *or* Cephas, *or the World, or Life, or Death, or things preſent, or things to come, all are yours, and yee are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.*

Jerem. 15. 15, 16. *Take me not away in thy long ſuffering: Know that for thy ſake, I have ſuffered rebuke; thy words were found, and I did eate them, and thy word was to me the joy and rejoycing of my heart.*

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Held forth together with Sundry other things in a *Letter* VVritten by a Friend, to a Friend, pouring out himſelf into his Boſome, and opening his heart unto him concerning the preſent Times and Providences, *&c.*

Solomon tells us, *Prov.* 19. *v.* 22. *That the deſire of a man is his kindneſs, and that a poor man is better then a lyer.* A poor man that hath a reall and cordial

cordial desire, to express his love & to shew kindness to another, but hath not power in his hand so to do, is better then a rich man that doth perform according to the power that is in his hand, somwhat that is beneficial to another, but it is not from an inward affection and desire; the actings of his hand are not from the inlarged desires and affections of his heart, *such a one is a lyer*. Give me leave to accomodate this to my self, I am one of the poor men of *Anathoth*, that have but little in mine hand, two Mites or so to cast into the Treasury; but have an enlarged heart and a lively desire to contribute to the Promoting of the Good and Welfare of all: Why should not this be reckoned to me as my kindness and my self and actings in this way be accepted of you and others of my antient and dear Friends, to whom I apply my self now in this Epistolary way, according to what I have, and not according to what I have not; I do not now present you with a curious and finely composed Sermon, nor with an elaborate Treatise, the World is full of such; Oh! that there were better use made of them, more and better fruit springing up from them then appears at this day; but this is a Lamentation, and well may it be for a Lamentation that there is price upon price put into the hand of Fools, and they have no heart unto them; and we may reckon upon it, that the many precious Sermons and Treatises which are abroad will come up in judgement against the men of this Generation and condemn them, for that

that such blessed light hath been, as by Preaching, so by Books and Sermons Preached and published, being conveyed into the world, and especially into this Land and Nation; and the community of people love darkneſſe rather then light; for my own part, I have been a poore Prophet of *Anathoth*, a Preacher of the Gospel, partly in the Country, partly in and about the City of *London*, between Forty and Fifty years; most of my time even to above Forty years, I have spent in and about *London*, continuing in the City all the time of the great PLAGUE, *Anno* 1625. and from that time, having obtained help from God, I have continued my relation and the exercise of my Ministery ever since in one place, till an Act of Parliament put a stop: endeavouring by plain and profitable Preaching, by quiet and peaceable living, to shew and set forth the glorious Gospel of the Great God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by whose Death and Resurrection, death and darkness and Mortality, which the first *Adam* by sin had let into the World, and opened a doore unto, is swallowed up in Victory, and Life, and Immortality is brought to Light, and is performing glorious Tryumphs, in and by the Lord Jesus. I have reduced the Main of my Preaching to the Apostle *Pauls* Dichotomy, *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*; yet not baulking other Doctrines that are superstructory and necessary to be built on these Foundations, as in particular obedience to Kings and Magistrates, and that for Conscience-sake

ence-sake

ence-ſake; perſuading and provoking people to pray for Kings and all in Authority under him, that we may live under them a peaceable and quiet life in all Godlineſs and honeſty: So that I bleſs the living God, I have no regret in my Conſcience, for having firſt or laſt driven in a way of Preaching or Praying any, either Treaſonable or Diſloyal deſigns; nor am I Conſcious to my ſelf, that any thing hath been performed by me to the imbaſſing of the Spirits of his Majeſties Subjects or debauching them, or drawing them from their Duty and Allegience, knowing how my Commiſſion runs, and what of the Counſel of the moſt high God is held forth in, *Prov.* 24. 21. *Rom.* 13. *v.* 1. 2. *Titus* 2. *v.* 1. 1 *Pet.* 2, *v.* 17. But Knowing withal, that it concerneth Magiſtrates and Rulers, that they Rule in the *Fear of God* as King *David* acknowledged they ought to do, 2 *Sam. v.* 23. *And that they be not a terrrur to good works, but to evil works.* Rom. 13. *That they ſet themſelves to puniſh evill doers, and to be for the praiſe of them that do well*: and truly it is ſad, when ſuch as are be truſted with Magiſtratical Power ſhew more ſeverity againſt ſuch as are Judiciouſly Conſciencious, and out of a Judicious and well-informed Conſcience are a little croſſing the Magiſtratical Impoſitions and Injunctions, then againſt men of Groſeſt Immoralities, openly Flagitious, Profligate, and Naught; and run to all exceſs of Wickedneſs. It were to be wiſhed, that in all Kingdoms and Commonwealths, Drunkards, and Swearers, and Whormongers,

mongers, and Sabboath-breakers, and unjuſt Dealers, with all other of that black and ragged Regiment, which is headed by the Devil the Prince of Darkneſs, might feel the ſharpeſt of the Magiſtrates Severity; while Sober, Judicious, and Conſciencious Chriſtians, partake of the benigne influencies of Magiſtratical Power and Governments, and ſit quietly under their own Vines and Fig-trees, and drink the Waters of their own Cyſtern: They the mean while ſetting themſelves to ſtuddy their Duty, and in Faithfulneſſe to perform it.

There are the Duties of particular relations, wherein and in the due management whereof, the Beauty and the Power of Godlineſs doth very much diſcover it ſelf, as in the Relation between the Husband and the Wife, between the Parents and their Children, between the Maſter and the Servant, between the Paſtor and the People; ſo are there between the Magiſtrate and the Subject: The well anſwering of which will conduce very much unto the more comfortable enjoyment both of one and other; and as it is much to be wiſhed, that Kings and Magiſtrates may have the Honour and Obedience performed to them which is their due; So it is likewiſe much to be deſired, that the Subjects under their Government, may have the Eaſe, Freedome, and Refreſhment which is juſtly to be expected by them. I live in the comfortable Hope, and joyfull Expectation of a Time, wherein the Church and People of God, ſhall have a more Free and Comfortable Enjoyment of themſelves, then ever yet;

yet; not Oppreſſions, Perſecutions, Oppoſitions, hard Uſages as all along, almoſt ever ſince the fall of *Adam*: Surely the Godly ſhall not alway be under Hatches and Harrows, and Wicked and Prophane Men, that neither Fear God, nor Reverence Men; Ruffle and Rant it, and poure out Scorn and Deriſion upon others that are as good as they, yea, it may be farr their betters in worldly reſpects, but be ſure their betters in Grace and Godlyneſs, ſuch ſhall not always behave themſelves in ſuch a manner: Surely the wicked ſhall not alwayes lift up their Horn on high, and puſh at the Godly with ſide and ſhoulder, but the Lord will (and we have his Faithfull Word and Promiſe for it) lift up the Horn of his People, keep the Feet of his Saints, when the Wicked ſhall be ſilent in Darkneſs, he will exalt the Horn of his Annointed, whether Godly Kings or Godly People, 1 *Sam. chap.* 2. Kings have in a civil way their anointing with materiſl Oyle which the Subjects partake not with them in, and in that reſpect they are peculiarly the anointed Ones; but ſuch as are really Religious and Godly have a ſpiritual annointing, the Scripture ſpeaks much of it, 2 *Cor.* c. 1. 1 *Joh.* 2. *ad fine*, *You have an unction* ſaith the Apoſtle *from the holy One*, which unction, as it is a teaching unction, and conduces much to the accompliſhing of the Saints as they are Prophets, as there the Apoſtle expreſſes, for ſaith he, *You have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things*, v. 20. And again, v. 27. *The annointing Teachers*, ſo

is

is it a priviledging unction, and conduces very much to the promoting of their Spiritual and Corporal Ease and Freedom from sore Burthens and Oppressions, and accomplishes them for the Kingly Dignity (understand it in the Mystery, not in the Letter) which the Lord Jesus hath by his blood purchased for them, and hath raised them up unto us. *Rev. 1. v. 6. He hath loved us, and washed us in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God our Father*: This ease and freedome from what is Oppressive, whether Imprisonment, Impoverishment, Banishment, Scorns, Reproaches, Persecution, &c. The Anointing promotes according to what the holy Prophet speaks, *Isa. 10. v. 27. And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.* This apprehension and oppinion concerning a more flourishing State of the Church and Saints then ever the World yet saw, such as wherein there shall be Righteousness and Peace, and wherein the Lyon shall lye down with the Lamb, and none shall hurt in all the holy Mountain of God; but *Jerusalem* shall be a quiet habitation, *Zions* King appearing in his Beauty, the Bride the Lambs Wife in her bravery clad in clean Linnen pure and white, which is the Righteousnes of the Saints, *Revel. 19.* *Zions* solemnities performed in a most perfect and compleat manner, the glorious Lord being to his Saints and people, as a place of broad Rivers where no Gallie with

Oars

Oars shall pass, no Funeral solemnities performed, yea no sicknes seazing upon them; for the Inhabitants shall say, I am not sick, the People that are therein shall be forgiven their iniquity; all or most of which expressions you find in *Is.* 33. This apprehension, I say the Scripture seems strongly to favour as that in the 37. *Psalm*, which is a Psalm of providence, penned on purpose to quiet, and calm, to support & sweeten the spirits of the Godly under all the Persecutions, Oppositions and hard Usages which they are subject to meet withall; and by means whereof, they are too apt to fall into Frets and Under-discomposures, to be put out of possession of their Souls by Impatience; it is said there, that *the meek shall inherit the Earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace*; and as I take it, our Saviour referrs to the Scripture alleadged before in *Mathew* 5. where among other Beatitudes, he pronounces a blessednes upon the Meek, such as carry Patiently, Calmely, and Quietly, and with a composed spirit, under all the Hardships they are put to undergoe by the Men of the Earth, *that these meek ones shall inherit the earth*: And by the way let me tell you, that this meekness and calmness of Spirit, is that which intitles to most pretious Promises and Priviledges, as a meek and quiet Spirit either in men or Women, is a thing very pleasing with God & he values it as a thing of great price, 1 *Pet.* 3. So is it also very beneficial and profitable to us, they that are beautified with it God will beautifie with Salvation, *Psalm* 149.

when

when God ariseth to Judgment, he hath always a special respect to the meek of the Earth, *Psal.* 76. The meek of the earth that set themselves to seek and shew forth, and be expressive of meekness, of all others are the likeliest to be hid in the day of the Lords anger, *Zepha.* 2. *v* 3. *Moses* was the meekest man in all the earth, as it is testified of him in *Numbers* 12. and when *Aaron* and *Miriam* spake against him, and dealt in a querulous manner with him concerning the *Ethiopian* woman, he was quiet and meek, and carryed as one that heard not, and as one in whose mouth were no reproofs, as *David* speaks of himself, *Psal.* 38. *v.* 13, 14. But doth the Lord suffer this to pass without checks and controule? no I'le warrant you, God will plead the Cause of his meek ones; God speaks quick and short, and to speak with a holy Reverence cutted to *Aaron* and *Miriam*, calls them out sharply, reproves them, and saith unto them, *How, were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses*: this meekness of Spirit my dear friends, I have seriously considered of, and weighed with my self.

First, In reference to my self.

Nextly, In reference to others, both Godly Ministers and professours too, for I must tell you, as I principally study God, Christ, the Mysteries of Godliness and my self; So do I study men and observe what spirits and carriages they are of, both preachers and professours, persons of several perswasions, and where I finde them to be of Meek, Humble, Lowly Spirits and Carriages;

notwithstanding the circumstantial differences between them, I can, I do Cordially own and imbrace one & another, but where either of them discover an elated spirit and bear up above their brethren, and keep at a distance from them upon the account of greater gifts and parts; and because their names are blowne up, and they swim upon a full sea of popularity, when others of their brethren, that it may be have as much soundness of Judgment, as much Grace as they, love Christ as much as they, are as Cordial to the cause of Godliness as they, are yet upon the account of meaner parts and not being in that esteem, have little or no respect from them; (I am abundantly satisfied in my self, that there is sufficient cause thus to animadvert, if any be offended, so let them:) For such, I wish they would study better, what it is to be of a true Gospel spirit, which they may learn from their Lord and Master the great Apostle and high Priest of their holy profession, who is ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς, who is ποιμὴν ὁ μεγας, who is ἀρχιποιμὴν, the good shepherd, the great shepherd, the chief shepherd, who was meek and lowly, and requires of them that are his under shepherds and all his Disciples, that they learn of him who was the Lord of all, yet because a servant to all. The example also of *Paul* who does take special knowledge of his Masters meekness, and is strongly argumentative from it as in the 2d. of the *Corinthians chap.* 10. *v.* 1. where he presses from the meekness and gentleness of Christ; his example I say contributes much

much to such a purpose; who though he was not behinde the chiefest Apostles, yet acknowledges himself not worthy to be called an Apostle, and though he knew his gifts and parts, that he spake with tongues more then they all, and had laboured more then they all; yet professes himself to be less then the least of all the Saints, a very nothing, and in his Doctrine teacheth, that there should not be a minding of high things, but a condescending to men of low degree; and I must profess for my own part, till I see more of this meekness of spirit in Preachers and Professours, I cannot think that ever we shall see the performance of these things, which we professe to live in the joyfull expectation of; surely we must all be better spirited, of a more Humble, Heavenly, Spiritual, Self-denying frame of Spirit before all be well with us. I am expressing as before my comfortable confidence concerning a better condition that the Church and Saints shall be brought into, before the final consummation the Prophet *Isaiah* 60. gives ground for, such a hope to be built upon, it is a pretious scripture, and I think it referrs to the state of the Church in this world; *Officers shall be peace, exactors, righteousness*, and very much to that purpose, the whole chapter is full of marrow and fatness, it drops like the dropping of a honey comb; the 21. and 22. Chapters of the *Revelations* also speak at a very high rate and tell us of new *Jerusalem*, comming down from heaven as a bride made ready for her husband; Of a City that

ſhall be of a glorious conſtitution, and that all things ſhall be made new, and very much to this purpoſe, which I conceive doth as the other paſſages before mentioned, referr to a ſtate in this life; I cannot but mention the ſecond of *Peter. chap.* 3. We according to his promiſe look for a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwells righteouſneſs and ſcripture which I have cauſe to remember with a moſt thankfull acknowledgment of a mercifull providence ordered out to my ſelf. When I had preached over the whole Chapter to that Verſe, and had ingaged to the verſe and preached one Sermon upon it, and had a more numerous multitude of Auditors, Miniſters and others then ordinary, upon the account of the Argument, which the Text led me unto: After I had preached that Sermon, which was at ſeven of the clock in the morning of the Lords-Day, according to my ordinary courſe that very day there was ſome diſturbance in the City, and it is known what was performed by them, and what after proceeding there was on the part of the Powers then in being; ingaged I then was to the proſecution of the Text the next Lords day: it was apprehended that it was no way ſafe for me to proceed in the diſcourſe, but that it was my wiſeſt courſe, either wholy to wave it, or at leaſt to intermitt the proſecution of it for a time. I diſputed the matter within my ſelf, commended my cauſe to God in a way of Prayer, and thereupon I judged thus; that if I ſhould baulke my Text which I had handled in part, and was falln upon

upon in course, having preached upon the whole foregoing part of the Chapter; I should do great disservice to my Lord and Master, and cast the whole Congregation under disappointment, which would expect to hear what I had further to say upon the point, and it would turn to my prejudice so to do. I brake, by the help of grace, the force of the temptation, proceeded in my course, gave some tollerable satisfaction to my Auditors, had some good approbation of my Labour, and all was well, very well, I had peace, the people profit; but this by way of digression.

For the apprehension and opinion concerning a more glorious State of the Church here on earth, I own it and conceive, that the Scriptures alleadged with multitudes more, give abundant ground for it: For the opinion concerning the Thousand Years, and the personal reign of Christ, I know it hath great patronage from learned and godly men: Others are of a different apprehension and judg it to be more proper to interpret the fore alleadged Scriptures of a glorious estate in the world to come, In the heaven of glory I mean. Whatever the difference between them be, and however the interpretation proceeds, I wish there may be no litigant spirit among the learned and godly concerning it, knowing that it is *Melius dubitare de occultis quam litigare de incertis*, as was the speech of *Austin* of old, and whatever our expectations be, whether of a more glorious estate here on earth, or of a perfect estate of glory in heaven, let you and mee

our hearts to make the best preparation we can for the appearance of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and that we may appear with some suteableness to the future productions of former predictions; for may we not think there will be occasion to say with respect to the performance of these things which are purposed concerning the Church of God in a way of mercy and grace, and to cry out as *Balaam* did with respect unto dreadfull productions in a way of judgment and severity, as in *Numbers* 22, 23. alas! who shall live when God doth this? and what will it avail us to see new *Jerusalem* coming down from heaven as a bride in her beauty and bravery, and our selves found in a state of deformity, and beggery, in rotten raggs; to have New *Jerusalems* Light and Glory breaking out, and have neither eye to see it, nor shoulders to bear up under the weight of it; to have all things made new, and nothing of newness of heart: to have the marriage of the Lamb kept, and we no wedding garments to be found on us.

There is a letter lately come forth to publick view bearing the Earl of *Marleboroughs* name, which I had an account of by a manuscript, I hear it is now in Print, whether with any variations and amplification I cannot say, what I heard I judged, *Primo auditu*, to be *Verbum, Scriptum, viro nobili dignum*; he therein asserting, pleading the reallity, substantiality of Religion and Godliness, which many, too many at this day most impudently, insolently, audaciously, *in suam*

perniciem

perniciem give judgment upon as a meer fancy and humane device, as if that Athiſtical ſpirit had a ſtamp of truth upon it; *Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor*, fear and fancy have given the firſt being to God and Religion, and ſo they ſleight it, diſguſt it, decry it, making nothing of it.

O! Monſters of men, *in quibus ne mica ſanæ mentis, ne granum ſalis*, men of corrupt minds reprobate concerning the faith as *Paul* ſpeaks, is it not my friends a time for God to work when men make void his Law, *Pſalm.* 119. and not onely his Law, his Inſtitutions and appointments, but himſelf and his very being too: Is it not time for God to appear and awake to Judgment? after a long time of ſilence and his ſeeming to be a ſleep, to vindicate and plead his Name, his Cauſe, his Word, his Worſhips, as now he hath begun to do; no wonder that at this day he anſwer us out of the Whirl-winde (as he did his ſervant *Job*, who had made a little too bold with God) that now he hath drawn his Sword, and bent his Bow, put his Arrows upon the ſtring and let them fly on every ſide, and what would we have him to do? tell me my friends, for I would be willing to know, what entertainment this Letter of the Earls finds, how it takes on one ſide or other, eſpecially on the part of the Grandees & Gentry, what judgment they make of it, and whether it be a *Ludibrium* or a *Documentum*, a matter of ſcorn or a Scholiaſt by which they are willing to be animadverted upon both as to their perſons and manners, whether they ſlight it and ſet light by it as *ſtramineum*

quid ſtercorcum quid, the iſſue of a fanatick friend-like brain, or to be ſolid and judicious, of a profitable improvment, and ſuch as hath a tendencie to move and provoke men to conſider more ſeriouſly of Religion and the things of Eternity, and ſo the Letter turn to a good account: This I deſire to know, Ile tell you upon what occaſion, I was told a very few days ago by a ſober perſon, that there are many and many of ſuch a Spirit, ſo debauched as that if any thing, whether Sermon, Treatiſe or ought elſe comes out in Print that diſcovers a friendlineſs to Religion and the ways of Holineſs, and gives a check though with much prudence and gentleneſs to the luſts of men and their ſinfull exorbitances and exuberancies, any thing that caſts a friendly aſpect upon the matters of God and Chriſt, eſpecially if it bears the name of ſuch as are counted Fanaticks, though otherwiſe Learned, Sober, Peaceable men that are devoted to the fearing of God and honouring of the King; and are as Cordially and Conſcientiouſly ſet to promote ſubjection to Magiſtrates higher or lower, and againſt whom no thing in the world can be objected but this, that they are not conforming, they either riſe up in ſtrongeſt oppoſition to it and explode it, or diſparage it and lay it by as not worthy to be medled with, but rather buried with ſcorn and contempt in ſilence, adjudging it to perpetual darkneſs never to ſee the light: Such a ſpirit of prophaneſs the Earl in his letter according to my apprehenſion and interpretation of it, ſeems to be either

either fore-apprehensive of, or actually discovering; if he were not, I know that both he and we all have cause to reckon upon and be in expectation of it; that men of such a spirit of prophaneſs ſhould come, both St. *Peter* (2 Epiſtle of *Peter* 2.) and St. *Jude* in his Epiſtle by a prophetical ſpirit and by divine inſpirment foretold, that in the laſt days ſhould come Scoffers and Mockers walking after their own Luſts and ſaying, *where is the promiſe of his coming*, ſuch and ſo ſpirited from hell and the devil, that they neither regard God, his Precepts, Promiſes, or threatnings, nor his judical actings and proceedings, when his hand is lifted up, they will not ſee nor minde it; the works of the Lord, and the opperation of his hands they will not have regard unto, ſo is it propheſied and ſo is it, and muſt it be fulfilled neceſſarily, and that becauſe it is ſo foretold and propheſied, and I may ſay upon this occaſion as our Saviour ſpeaks, *Woe unto the world becauſe of offences*; it is neceſſary that offences come, but woe be to them by whom they come; ſo it is neceſſary that propheſies be fulfilled, but woe be to them by whom ſuch kind of propheſies are fulfilled; for as much as while they not thinking of it fulfill what is foretold in a prophetical way, they run quite croſs to what is held forth in a preceptive way, & ſo run themſelves upon eternal ruine; as to ſuch whoever, wherever they be, I ſhall take the boldneſs to ſay to them, are you abſolute and independent, being not at all depending upon God, hath he nothing to do with you? have you

nothing

nothing to do with him? will you say as they said in *Jeremiahs* time, *Jeremiah* the second, *We are Lords we will not come to thee*, or as *Pharoah*, *Who is the Lord that we should obey him*? are you at a point whether you be saved or damned, whether you go to heaven or hell, or do you count these things meer fancies that have no reality in them? is it nothing to you at once to loose God and Christ, your souls, and that to all eternity? Is it nothing to you, & of no signification with you to be for ever shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to be tumbled into Hell, with the guilt of all your iniquities upon your Consciences, when your iniquities shall be upon your bones, as *Ezekiel* phraseth it, and while others shall be Timber for the Building, you shall be fuell for the burning and be sweltering for ever under the unsupportable weight of Gods wrath, and endure the gnawing of the worm that shall never dye, and the furius flames of a fire that shall never be quenched; in a word, how will your hearts indure, and your hands be strong; as *Ezekiel* expresses himself: *When the Lord Jesus shall appear with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, at the Judge before whom you must be summoned and cited to appear, and have the judgment of eternal Condemnation passe upon you, by him who came at first cloathed with garments of Salvation, with a Golden Scepter of Grace in his hand, holding forth a pardon, a Free-pardon to all, that all might have the benefit of it, that would take hold of it.* Are you resolved within your selves, that neither God, nor Christ, nor Spirit, nor Angels, nor Ministers,

niſters, nor Scripture Promiſes, nor Scripture Threatnings, nor life, nor death, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature; none of which will ſeparate the Saints from God in Chriſt Jeſus, and from his love, ſhall ſeparate you from your luſts, and the Devill; but you will live and die, and damn with them; If it be thus with you, and that this is the Spirit you doe, and are reſolved to walk in, and that you ſcorn to be checked and controlled by any man whatſoever: neither by word or writing, you will doe what is good in your own eyes, be it never ſo evill in the eyes of God or man: Then let me propound to your conſideration, or rather to the conſideration of others (for if you be ſo ſpirited, as I have already expreſt, there is little hope that you will conſider) what the Lord by the Prophet ſpeakes, *Iſa.* 28. *v.* 14. and ſo forward: *Heare the word of the Lord ye ſcornfull men, becauſe ye have ſaid, we have made a Covenant with Death and Hell, are we at an agreement, when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſſe thorow it ſhall not come to us; for we have made lyes our refuge, and under falſhood we have hid our ſelves: therefore judgement alſo will I lay to the line and righteouſneſſe to the plummet, and the haile ſhall ſweep away the refuge of lies, and the water ſhall overthrow the hiding place. And your Covenant with death ſhall be diſannulled, and your agreement with hell ſhall not ſtand; when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſs thorow, then ye ſhall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth, it ſhall take you, for morning by morning*

ſhall

shall it passover, by day and by night it shall be a vexation onely to understand the report. For the bed is shorter then that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower then that he can wrap himself in it, for the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, *he shall be wroth as in the Valley of Gibeon, that he may doe his work, his strange work and bring to passe his act, his strange act: Now therefore be not yee mockers, least your bands be made stronge, for I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts a Consumption determined upon the whole earth.* And is this matter for you to scorn at? Let me further tell you, that please your selves in a scornfull spirit, and in the out-going of it, that delight your selves in your scorning and will not turn at Gods reproof, by his Word, and by his judgements; by both which he loudly cals, but ye refuse to answer; he stretches out his hand, but you will not regard, but set at naught all his counsels, and will none of his reproofs; *He also will laugh at your calamity and mock when your feare cometh*, Prov. 1. 24. and so forward, and know as the Lord speaks by his Prophet *Ezekiel* chap. 7. These things have a reality in them, and are not as an eccho the sounding againe of the mountaines.

While I am declaiming against such a Generation of men, as is before mentioned; I see cause to be under such a sad seizure as was holy *David*, who gives us this account of himself, *Psalm* 55. *Psalm.* 119. Fearfulness and trembling did come upon him, that horrour had taken hold of him and overwhelmed him, and wherefore all

this?

this? what was it that troubled him? he tells us, it was because of the wicked that had forsaken Gods Law. By the way, observe what a contrary spirit most men, yea men professing Godliness, are possessed with, (and acted by,) that can see and hear the abominable impieties committed in the Land, and not be moved at all, and is it not almost grown quite out of fashion to lay to heart other mens sins and high horrid provocations, they think its well if they take any notice of their own; but this is it I drive at; It may well raise up wonder and astonishment, to consider, that any such persons should be found in this Nation, after such a time of Gospel Light and Grace, and plentifull means of Salvation, which one might think would have levened the land all over, and Sainted the whole Kingdom; and as after such means, so under such dispensations as at this day are ordered out, that should bear so high, and drive so desperately, so furiously, as many do in City and Country carring as if they would dare God to his face, make a challenge to him, and as its said in *Job.* 15. 20. They stretch out their hands against God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty, they run upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers, such are men of high dareing spirits. I should think it would do well for them to take up a little, and when they are in their fullest career, to make a stop and pause somewhat of consideration and moderation would not do amiss; nor would I ever wish a

man

man to provoke the Lord, unless he first be sur
of this, that he is stronger then he, for so th
Apostle Paul argues, 1 *Cor.* 10. 22. *Do we provo*
the Lord to jealousie? are we stronger then he?
would wish such kinde of persons to consider
Pharoahs case, and Gods expostulation with him
Exod 9. 17. *As yet exaltest thou thy self against my pe*
ple, — I will smite thee and thy people with pes
lence, &c. If any shall reply and say, but wha
occasion is there thus to speak? I answer, it
well known, & observed what cruel actings ther
are at this day on the part of under-officer
against their fellow subjects, such as perhaps h
Majesty and the Parliament would not so we
like of, as being *supra statutum*, and that to a hig
degree.

But what is the day and dispensations of it that w
speak of?

I answer, It is not the day of Judgment, th
Doctrine whereof is the terrour of the Lord
2 *Cor.* 5. Concerning which, I have ofte
thought, that arming our selves with that an
other weapons of our spiritual Warfare, which
are not Carnal but Mighty through God, we ma
be bold to encounter and grapple with th
proudest and stoutest of the sons of men upon th
earth: This Terrour of the Lord, is that which
where it comes in the power of it upon a defile
Conscience, will make a man to be a *Magor Missa*
bib, (*i.e.*) a terrour to himself, as *Jeremiah* speak
Chap. . This day of Judgment we all ough
to be perswaded of, and to be in a daily expecta
tion

tion of, and preparation for; But though this preſent day be not (the day of Judgment,) yet it is a day of Judgment? and many Preludiums there are both in Scripture and in the courſe of Providence which we may look upon, as anticipations of that Great and Terrible day. We have ſomthing ſignified to ſuch a purpoſe in *Pſal.* 50. 3, 4, 5. *verſes. Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence: a fire ſhall devoure before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtious round about him. He ſhall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judg his people. Gather my Saints together unto me: thoſe that have made a Covenant with me, by Sacrifice.* Where the Lord calls upon the ſons of men from one end of the earth to the other, and makes a general citation of them to gather themſelves together, he himſelf being upon a ſolemn appearance with devouring fire. As for the preſent day I call it a day of Judgment, *the Lord, whoſe fire is in* Zion, *and whoſe furnace is in* Jeruſalem, *Eſai.* 31. 9. hath kindled his fire, and is heating his Furnace in —— *England* and *London*; its good for us to ſtrike while the Iron is hot, we may be guided ſo to ſtrike, as that our Iron may be turned into Gold, and by means of this firy furnace well improved, many ruſty Veſſels may come forth as Veſſels for the finer, and fitted for the maſters uſe.

We have theſe latter years had an account of many terrible Apparitions and Prodigies, and other ſtupendious acts of providence which have cauſed much amazment and amuzment for the preſent;

preſent; But the impreſſion of them are almoſt quite worn out, the remembrance of them is paſt and gone, and we are yet to ſeek as to a genuine interpretation of them. There is Miſtery Chriſt, Miſtery Goſpel, Miſtery *Zion*, Miſtery Godlineſs, Miſtery Sin, Miſtery *Babylon*, ſo is there Miſtery Providence; that God that hath his way in the Sanctuary, hath his way in the Sea, and his paths in the great Deeps, and his footſteps are not known, *Pſalm* 77. the ſcriptures have their *δυσνόητα τινα*, that is, things hard to be underſtood; ſo hath the book of Providence; there are Miſterious Texts in it, the holy Prophet found it ſo, *Pſalm* 73. It was, *dolor in Oculis*, in the ſtudy of which, his eyes were made to water his head and heart to ake again.

And perceiving how apt he was to run upon dangerous miſtakes, he calls himſelf a *Behemoth*, a foul beaſt and acknowledging his Ignorance and folly, recovers himſelf and ſees it to be his beſt courſe to draw neer to God, and ſo he did, and found the benefit and comfort of it to his dying day. The ſword of Warr hath lately been drawn and hath done great Execution, much Proteſtant blood hath been ſhed, when it will be quiet and fall a ſleep again, after its awakening who can tell? The terrible ſword of Peſtilence is alſo now awakened, and it is acting its part according to the Commiſſion granted unto it; how high this may riſe, how farr it may reach, how long it may continue, and what may ſucceed and come after it, who can tell? Theſe things are laid up in ſtore

ſtore with God and ſealed among his Treaſures to whom Vengance and Recompences belong, who will make the feet of his Enemies ſlide in due time, for the day of their Calamity is at hand, and the things that ſhall come upon them make haſte, Deut. 32. 2. 34, 35. As touching the Peſtilential Contagion now amongſt us, it hath a very formidable aſpect, and begins to open its mouth wide and to devoure on every ſide; many are poſſeſſed with fear and trembling, to think what will become of them, and are ready to cry out with *Balaam, Wo and alas, who ſhall live when God doth this?* and well may ſinners in *Zion* be afraid and fearfullneſs ſurprize the hypocrite in heart, *Eſai.* 33. And ſuch as are of guilty conſcientes as not being able to dwell with devouring fire and with everlaſting burnings. Its a becoming thing for ſuch to let fall their ſpirits, to come down from their grandeur, to turn in upon their own hearts and humble themſelves under the mighty hand of God, who though fury be not in him, yet if any will ſet himſelf againſt him, he will be ſure to finde that God is more then his match, and will be as a devouring flame to a buſh of dry thorns and ſtubble, and will in a moment burn them up; Its their wiſeſt courſe to make peace with God and take hold of his ſtrength, and they ſhall make peace with him as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Eſai.* 27. 4, 5. Its not for any to turn Quiricants and Plaintiffs againſt God, who is ſufficiently able to ſhew cauſe for what he doth, and give a reaſon of all his actings

though he be not bound to do it. Nor is it fit to say unto him (what doest thou,) its proper for us all to put our mouths in the dust; and now that his hand is lifted up to see it, submitt to it and learn righteousnes by it, knowing that they that will not see it shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people, *Esai.* 26.

And that they that will not fear with a fear of duty, shall fear with a fear of punishment in a judicial way, and if men will deal proudly against God, he will be found to be above them, yea in the very things wherein they do deal proudly against him. Its holy Counsel and never more proper for men to take then at this day, which *Jeremiah* gives us in the 3. of his *Lamentations* 40, &c. Wherefore doth the living man complain; a man for the punishment of his sin every word hath its weight, and is emphatically argumentative; Its man and not God, and shall man complain against God, its a living man and that speaks Gods patience and forbearance; he might have struck him dead and sent him to hell, but he lives, and is it fitting that he should complain, and not rather magnifie Gods patience and goodness, and say its of the Lords mercies that we are not utterly consumed. Its a man for the punishment of his sin, that which he suffers under and complains of, is of his own procuring, he eats the bread of his own bakeing, drinks the drink of his own brewing, reaps the harvest of his own seed; nay, nay, it is not for the living man to complain, but as the counsel is there given to search

and

and cry his ways and turn to the Lord his God; to be humbly inquiring into the Reason, into the very Reason why God is fallen out with *England* and *London*, that have been good friends so long? Why he hath taken his Rod into his hand and gives us such heavy blows, that he fetches blood from us and strikes us dead? And indeed let this be our business at this day, to know and find out the Proper Reason of this present Plague. To find out the causes of a Disease we count hath a great tendency to the Cure, but who and where is the wise man, that may understand this? and who is it to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it for what the Land is Plagued and in a way to perish, and to become as a wilderness that none passeth through, they are *Jeremiah*'s words, *Jer. 9. verse 12.*

If such a course be not taken and vigerously prosecuted without partiality, and an ingenuous acknowledgment made, that to all other our sins we have added these or these till we find out the *Jonah* that makes the seas tempestuous, the *Achan* that troubles the Land, the *Sheba* son of *Bicry* which makes the disturbance and so must be beheaded, and his head cast over the wall. Till this be done it will not be well with us, but we may even call for the mourning women as it follows in that place, To take up a wailing and to make bitter Lamentation, for death is come into our windows and is entred into our palaces to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets. I hear that diverse

of our Preachers have been performing something to such a purpose, improving the Scriptures, and giving account from them what particular sins have formerly provoked God to send the Plague upon a people, this is something to the purpose: But what if there be some or other abomination committed in the Land, which lyes heavy on it, and the cry of it is heard in the eares of the Lord of Hostes, that till it be found out, the mouth of it stopt and it self removed; some or other sin which the Scripture doth not so clearly and in terms make mention of; for I suppose it may be so, that sins may be committed that have scarce ever been heard of before, as God sometimes bringeth to light strange punishments, and armes himself with weapons of his Indignation, which he hath not formerly made use of, as we have it in *Job* 31. *v.* 3. *Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?* So there may be uncouth unheard of sins. Now this I drive till this or that particular evil be found out, Confessed, Repented, and Reformed, till the proper vein be opened, and the finger laid upon the very sore; we may pine away and perish in our iniquity, and the Land become desolate without Inhabitant. *Nathan* said unto *David* thou art the man, *David* said of himself I am the man, this is my sin, I have made some observation in my daily Course of reading Scriptures, of that passage in *Eze.* 15. 8. *I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass*, and the like you find in *chap.* 20. *v.* 27. Now had they committed

committed but one treſpaſs, yea they had multiplied their treſpaſſes; But we may underſtand it, either as if all their treſpaſſes were run into one, or there was a Maſter a Monſter treſpaſs one or other treſpaſs of ſuch notoriety that God would not pardon, but take vengance and do execution with furious rebukes. Whatever the cauſe is, a cauſe there is why the Plague is broken out among us and begins to rage and beat down on every ſide; And to be ſure in the general, Sin is the cauſe, but happy we if we had an interpreter, one of a thouſand to declare unto us our unrighteouſneſs, and the unrighteouſneſs in ſpecial, which teſtifies and pleads againſt us and hath procured this ſore Judgment of the Peſtilence, which is as a ſword ſharpened and furbiſhed, and for ought we know is ſharpened and furbiſhed to make a ſore ſlaughter. And ſhould we then make mirth? what if it contemn our Rod, our Srength, our Riches, Honour and Beauty of our Ornaments, as it did of old; the Rod, the Strength, and Beautiful Ornaments of *Iſrael*, and of *Judah*, when it proved the Sword of the great men which were ſlain; the ſword entring into their privy Chambers, & the point of it ſet againſt their gates, that their hearts might be faint, & their ruines be multiplied with terror of Princes and people. Ye find that thus it was threatned and done to *Jeruſalem*, and *Judah*, *Ezek.* 21. 8, 9. And as it is further expreſt, *Ezek.* 7. 8, 9. 10. *Now will I ſhortly poure out my fury upon thee, and accompliſh mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will*

will recompence thee for all thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pitty: I will recompence thee according to thy ways, and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee, and ye shall know that I am the Lord that smiteth. Behold the day, behold the day is come, the morning is gone forth, the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. With revenging recompenses God cometh upon the Back of them, yea, to their faces he tells them, he would not spare nor have pity; *Utinam non sic Nobiscum*, but behold the day is come, behold it is come, the Rod is gone forth, the Rod is Blossomed, Pride is Budded, Violence is risen up into a Rod of Wickedness, and Wickedness is risen up into a Rod of Judgment and Destruction. And let us know and be assured, that he whose life is in his Iniquity, *Cujus vivere est peccare* so our Translators expres, *Ezekel 7. verse 13.* That he shall not strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life. And for such as make iniquity the iniquity of their hearts, (that is) set their hearts upon their iniquity, they shall finde that when the iniquity of their heels shall compass them about which is the Psalmists phrase in the 49 *Psalm*; their wickedness wil prove bitter, yea bitterer then gall and wormwood, it will reach to the heart and make them cry out as in *Jer. 4. v. 18, 19. My bowels, my bowels I am pained at the very heart.* In such a day as this is, which is a day of sharp Rebuke from God, as it hath been of latter times a day of sharp Rebuke from Majestrates and men in Authority to some of us: Its fit for us all to humble our selves and reckon upon it that God cals to Mourning

and

and Weeping; *Jeremiahs* Commission impowered him to say to the King and the Queen: *Jerem.* 13. *Humble your selves sit down in the dust*; And I know no reason to the contrary, but if Kings and Queens, Princes and Nobles, and Grandees of the World sin as others doe, they should humble themselves, Repent and Abase themselves before God as others ought to do and some do: If ever they will finde that mercy with God, which others in the way of Repentance hope to finde. God and godliness are no respecters of persons, there is not one way for Kings, and another way for Subjects; one way for Princes and Nobles, and another way for Pezants and Plebeians; one for Rich, and another for Poor to be saved in. The same truths are to be believed, the same, yea the severest duties are indespensable, required, and to be performed and practised by one and other: If any man, yea any man be *he who he will, will be Christs Disciple, he must deny himself take up his Crosse and follow him*: Religion is too noble and generous a thing to stoop to any mans humour in the World. He that will not be saved upon Gods terms, may and shall go without Gods Salvation; God will abate nothing of his price, nor be beholding to any man to come to heaven, he that likes not the terms upon which heaven & salvation is propounded may let it alone, if one will not deal for it others will. As to a due comportment with present times and providences besides what I have already said; I say further, that it is for every man to study the Plague of his own

heart, the sore of his own soul, they are scripture expressions, 1 *King.* 8. 2 *Chron.* 6.

We are to reckon the Lord calls to weeping and mourning, and to sigh and cry for all the abominations that have been committed in the Land; to smite with the hand and stamp with the foot and say as *Ezekiel* expresseth it. Alas! alas! to do as the *Ninivites* did, when *Jonah* had delivered his message, judgment was but in denounciation as to them, its in actual execution upon us; *they believed God and proclaimed a Fast, put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least of them; the King himself arose from his throne and laid his Robe from him and covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes, and he caused it to be proclaimed and published by the decree of the King and his Nobles; That neither Man, nor Beast, Herd, nor Flock should taste any thing, nor feed, nor drink water, but that Man and Beast should be covered with sackcloath, and cry mightily unto God, and turn every one from the evil of his ways, and from the violence that is in their hands, and all this upon a probability, nay a possibility, a paradventure, a who knows, who can tell whether God will not Return, and Repent and Turn from his fierce anger that we perish not.* A most eminently exemplary pattern and president worthy the imitation of all the Cities and Countries in *England* and the whole World; Now fye upon it and shame to us all, that we should be so shy, so proud and I know not what, as not to follow such examples better: *But the men of* Ninivie *shall rise up in Judgment against the men of this Generation and condemn it, for they*

they repented at the preaching of Jonah, *and at his once preaching*; I know not that ever he preached a ſecond time, God had much a doe to bring him to that once. We have had preaching upon preaching, precept upon precept, line upon line, and all our preaching little avails, and many of thoſe that have been upon this work are ſilenced, ſecluded, and ſet aſide, and in the rome of them there are others come up, of ſome of which ſetting aſide their Conformity; I know, and others know better then I, that there is little or nothing to commend them; they have gotten their Benefices and ſpiritual promotions double treble, quadruble and very jolly they are as men now of a higher elevation, I grudge none of them their Preferments, I am ſure I do not, onely I wiſh they would be better, do better, walk more worthy of the Magiſtrates bounty and the rich proviſion that is made for them. As for my ſelf, I have been a Miniſter and Preacher towards Fifty Years, and this I ſay, that being now deprived, together with the liberty of my Miniſtry, which is more to me then all the world beſide; of my Salery of Forty pounds *Per Annum* which was the top of my preferment, though I have not been without offers of better maintainance, which for Conſcience ſake I have refuſed. I have been as well pleaſed with the courteous reſpects that I have met withall as I have paſſed along in the ſtreets, as I could have been with the beſt preferments that could have been caſt upon me in *England*. And if I could in the way of my

Miniſtry

Miniſtry ſerve my God, my King my Country without check and controule for the few days that I have to live in the world, *I care not if I went clad in Canvas, and laboured all the week long for my bread, onely reſerving time for my ſtudy, faring hard, enduring much, for I hope I can ſay to me, to live is Chriſt, and if ſo, I am ſure then to dye will be Gain.* I have ſaid ſomwhat already as to a ſuitableneſſe of carriage and deportment in ſuch a day of Calamity; this I ſay moreover to you my Friends or Others, If the Lord ſhould ſpare you, as I hope he will many of you, for the Judge of all the World will do Right, and I am not without hope that he will, reſerving to himſelf his abſolute ſoverainty as its fit he ſhould ſhewing ſome proof of it, will make a difference between them that fear him and them that fear him not. *Be ye that ſhall eſcape as the Doves of the Valeys, every one of you mourning for his iniquity.* If any of you ſhould ſay to me, do you charge us with iniquities and put us upon mourning for them; I would ſay plainly to you and ten thouſands more, not excepting my ſelf; grant it that we are not *Iniqui*, yet we have *Iniquitates Noſtras*, that is, though we be not wicked, yet we may have, nay we have our wickedneſs: Grant that you are not proud in the abſtract, as the expreſſion is in the 50. of *Jeremiah* and the 31. *verſe* concerning *Babylon*, *Behold I am againſt thee, oh thou moſt proud, in the Hebrew*, זדון *pro* איש זדון, *Superbia pro vir Superbiæ*, a man of pride as the *Septugint* reads it, ὑβρισία, if you be not covetouſneſs in the abſtract,

not

not so covetous as to be denominated by it; yet there may be much of it found in you and so of all other sins, of all which we have too too much in us: The Prince of this World came and found nothing in Christ, but alas he comes and finds much in us for his purpose to advantage his designes against us, upon which account we have and shall have cause to go mourning to our graves. Happy we, that we have an Advocate, a merciful High Priest in Heaven, at the Fathers right hand who pitieth us, and appears before God on purpose that he might plead for us, and procure acceptance for our persons and services, which in themselves are worthy of Abdication, Rejection, and Reprobation with greatest scorn. Mourne we then for our own Iniquities, and the Iniquities of others, and for the bitter Fruits and Effects and Productions of them; and while we take comfort in this that we have *Premitias Spiritus*, yet keep we humble in this respect, that they are but *Primitiæ*, but the first fruits of the Spirit, and that there are *Reliquiæ Carnis*, foul filthy deforming and defiling reliques of the flesh and that to so great a Proportion. Mourn we I say, but not as men without hope, concerning our Souls and the following Eternity; yea bear up comfortably in respect of the Body and our Obnoxiousnesse to the Present PLAGUE, which by divine appointment hath invaded us, and is now *Undi qua qua pessimdans*: Consider in whose hand it is to order and direct. I would wish you seriously to consider and weigh well the condition

dition and qualifications propounded in the 91. *Pſalm*, and what account you can give of them, and of your ſelves concerning them: are you ſuch as make the moſt high your habitation, dwelling in his ſecret place, are you ſuch as ſet your hearts to know his name? Have you ſet your intireſt and moſt intenſive love upon him, place your truſt and confidence in him; have you ſaid of the Lord, *He is my Refuge and my Fortreſſe, my God in whom will I truſt*: know then that you are a ſecured people, the promiſory part of the Pſalm ſmiles upon you, ſpeaks moſt comfortably to you, preſents you with Milk and Butter, with Oyle and Honey, with Marrow and Fatneſſe, as in a lordly diſh; and fear you not that a Hammer and a Naile will be your ſecond Service. Promiſes that are made there, are great and precious, rich and plenteous; they are promiſes that are not made in vain, but muſt and ſhall be performed. But how? In the very Letter of them, why not? But to all that are godly and anſwer the qualifications; I ſay, and query thus: Firſt, did you ever hear of any man that did actually bear upon them; and that did imbark himſelf in them, accommodate them, put them in ſuit, and plead them, and confidently without hesitancy and fluctuating of Spirit believe them; Did you ever know any man doe this and dye of the *Plague*? But you will ask me, may it not be ſo? I anſwer, I dare not ſay, but ſo it may be: The queſtion was agitated Forty years ago, and by ſome held in the Negative, that godly perſons acting a particular

Faith

Faith upon a particular Promiſe cannot; I am not altogether of their perſwaſion: I queſtion whether the Promiſes there made, that the Plague ſhall not come nigh the dwellings of ſuch will give ſo clear ground and footing for ſuch a fulneſſe of Belief and Confidence; all temporal Promiſes have their limitations and exceptions, and God reſerves a liberty to chaſten his childrens delinquencies, to try and exerciſe their graces, and he will be known to be of abſolute Sovereignty. As I ſaid before, he will doe that that ſhall be for his people beſts, his promiſes one and another ſhall be performed, one way or other, either in the letter or by equivalency: This I would ſay to you, and my ſelf on this occaſion: Let us doe our utmoſt endeavour, that we may be, and be found perſons ſo ſpirited and qualified, as the Pſalmiſt expreſſes, and let God doe with us what he will, we need not be ſolicitous, but poſſeſſe our ſoules in ſweeteſt peace and ſecurity; and if the Plague ſhould come and ſeize upon us, the property of it ſhall be altered, and as other ſickneſs ſhal be uſefull to bring us home to our own Country and to our Fathers houſe, where we ſhall be as well as heart can wiſh; where we ſhall never know ſin nor ſickneſſe, Plague nor Poverty, nor Perſecution; and the time is at hand when death it ſelf and hell ſhall be caſt into the lake of fire, *Revel.* 20. Its a high expreſſion; I pray you mind it. I would have added one word to the point, I touched before in a Cautionary way.

Let them that hold the queſtion, *Whether a godly*

ly man in the actual exercise of his Faith, and Faith upon such promises, as we spake of before, *may dye of the Plague, yea, or no?* In the Negative; Look to it, least in their own persons, & their own dying that kind of death, they prove not the affirmative.

For you and me Brethren, let us be true to God and godlinesse, and be bold to trust him with all your concernments. Let our hearts be fixed trusting in the Lord, and then fear nothing, neither Plague, nor Famine, nor Sword, nor wrath of men; this wrath shall praise him, and the remainder thereof shall he restrain. Its a time wherein many are grown worse and worse, according to *Revel.* 22. *Let him that is filthy be filthy still*; which is spoken, *Non optando imperando, approbando, sed propheteando, & judicialiter pronunciando.*

Let us *grow better and better*, the same Text requires; *That they that are holy be holy still*; and to be sure that is spoken *imperando approbando*: Let us watch and keep our garments close to us, and clean about us, manifesting and making out that difference, which our God by his calling hath made between us and others, by a difference of disposition and conversation: Let us look to it, that Christ be in us, the principle of spiritual life, and be assured he will be in us the hope of eternal glory: Let us not rest in a form of godlinesse, but presse after the power of it: You know the Scripture insists much upon Power, there is the power of Christ, the power of the Spirit, the power of the Gospel, the power of the Resurrection, the

power

power of the Kingdome, the power of Godlines, the power of an endlesse life, the power of the world to come; all this should make us minde Power. Oh take heed of a powerlesse profession, a powerlesse godliness; rest not satisfied with a mere effigies, a dead image, such as many carnal professors, set up to themselves and fall down to worship. Statues which themselves become like unto; having eyes but they see not, eares but hear not, &c. Poor soules who feed upon ashes, a deceived heart turns them aside, they compasse God with lyes, and run away with a lye in their right hand; let us look to this that we have a Union with Christ our Mystical head, and be carefull to hold that head, *Colossians* 2. 19. Study the Mystery of that expression and reduce it to daily practice; think it not enough to be in a good way, but be good in the way. It is not, *Blessed are they that are in an undefiled way*, but *blessed are the undefiled in the way*, *Psal* 119. 1. v. We may be in a true and Gospel Worship, and not be right and true in that Worship. What then, when the way of the Lord shall be found strength to the upright, destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity, *Prov.* 10. v. 29. Yea though in the way, yea the rather, the sooner; the very way will throw them out, it will tire and founder them, while the upright shall *Mutare vires*, youths shall faint, young men shall fall, but they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint, *Esaiah* 40. *Hosea* 14. and the last verse

verse speaks to the same purpose. *The ways of the Lord are right, the just shall walk in them, transgressors shall fall in them.* Be ye very studious of learning the truth as it is and lies in Jesus; let it appear that you are good proficients in that learning, by your putting off the Old man. The Apostle *Ephes.* 4. useth a metaphor taken from a Garment, such is the Old Man, a Rotten, Ragged, Motheaten, Corrupt, Musty, Greasie Garment, its all filthiness and corruption; nay let me tell you, the Plague is in it, verily it is, Oh then off with it and throw it upon some hedge or into some ditch, and put on the New Man that will make you comely and trim in the eyes of God, Angels and men: Its the new creature in Christ that is the availing thing, Circumcision, Uncircumcision, outward Baptisms, Knowledge, Gifts, Parts, Priviledges, all these and all other externals without the New Creature will avail nothing, signifies nothing with God; therefore be ye carefull of this, and that you answer the New Creature with a New Carriage and suitableness of Conversation, escaping the polutions of the world, not onely by the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour as Hypocrites may do, and afterwards come to be entangled again and overcome, and so their latter end prove worse then their beginning, as its expressed in the second of *Peter*, but let it be through the righteousness of God, and by the means of the great and precious promises, and by a participation of the Divine Nature, that your escapes from

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the polations of the world and the contammination thereof is brought about, and then all will prove well at last. But while I perswade you to put on the New Man, and to be in a sanctified state; I must needs mind you of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ in his Merrit and Righteousness by Faith for free Justification, and then you will have the change of Rayment, spoken of in the 3. of *Zechariah* and the 4 verse; And so putting on Christ, keeping him on never putting him off again, walk up and down in him, rise up and lie down in him, and to vary the metaphor, as the Scripture doth; feed upon him daily for he is as cloathing, so meat and drink to us; *Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you, if you do, you have eternal life*, you have it already, its begun; and so indeed it must be begun in this world, for it is the same eternal life that the Saints live here and in heaven, the same for nature and kind, though there are differences in degrees; they that begin not their eternal life here, shall never go to heaven to begin it there; ye must have heaven come down from God out of heaven here in grace and holiness, or else you shall never come into heaven after you go out of this World. Wicked men and unbelievers begin their hell here in the sinfull part of it, and hereafter they shall have their hell compleated, in the suffering and tormenting part of it; so on the other hand, godly persons begins their heaven here in the gracious part of it, and then the glorious part is superadded here-

after, and it is but the parting with a little breath, and the sending out that, its but the knocking down of a weak mud wall, and the impenitent sinner (oh miserable he) will have his hell compleated: The godly believer (oh blessed he) will have his heaven compleated and both one and other be in a standing condition, such as shall never know nor admitt of changes to all eternity; there is no such μεγα χασμα between heaven and earth, but that there may be an entercourse and converse now; but there is a vast gulf between heaven and hell; *Luke* 16. and whereas I speak of eternal life begun here, I say it is by the means of eating the *flesh and drinking the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which must be understood spiritually, and spiritually performed, not in the Letter but in the Mystery: We must not here, *Terrenum concipere*, its the spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing: I am of this belief and perswasion, that if a man that was present at the *Crucifying the Lord of Life* had gotten a piece of his holy flesh and eaten it, and catcht some of his blood and drunk it down, it would have profited him nothing, as to his Souls condition and the concernments thereof, but that by the way. I have been and am perswading to look to the main, to minde and make after real and substantial godliness, and to be cordial to it, I presse it still; deal not complementally with it and in the way of Courtship; make it your main business and not as a παρεργον a matter by the by, and be sure that it be commander

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in chief, and so it must and will be, or it will be nothing, its of too noble and generous a nature to be an underling to any man or to any mans lusts in the world, be he who he will; and while I urge and press godliness I would have old godliness considered of and owned; I mean *Abels* godliness, and *Enochs* godliness, and *Abrahams* godliness, which was as good godliness as ever was in the world; let us think it no scorn to be commanded by their examples to write after their coppy. Let us not be sloathfull but followers of the holy Patriarchs, that by Faith and Patience inherit the promises; *Concordet vita mea cum Patriarchis maneat in Eternum anima mea Compatriarchis*, only look diligently with all possible care to this, that we be not mistaken about godliness, for its a much mistaken thing in the world, and the mistakes about it, though very common, yet are they of most dangerous consequence, and will be found so to be ere it be long, let you and I walk before God as *Enoch* and *Abraham* did, in the humility and integrity of our hearts, and keep close to him while others study sinfull and unwarrantable latitudes and walke at a losse: Be we carefull that whatever the times be, we never be the worse for them, nor they the worse for us, that it may not be said of us, as of *Judah* of old, *Hosea* 11. *verse* 12. Ephraim *compasseth me about with lies, and the house of* Israel *with deceit: but* Judah *yet ruleth with God, and is faithfull with the Saints.* This is the way to bring a blessing upon us, and let times and providences be what they will, it shall

go well with us, if greater ſtorms and tempeſts ariſe upon us then ever yet our eyes beheld in reſpect of mans actings, we ſhall have a weather-ſhoare, a ſhelter, a hiding place, a refuge, a chamber of retirement, let Gods appearances be never ſo formidable and dreadfull: God will be the hope of his people, and Godlineſſe and a good conſcience will befriend them to purpoſe, and make them ſing like birds of Paradice, when others ſhall houle and lament for the miſery that will come upon them, being caſt under a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation that ſhall devoure the adverſary. And to the honour of godlineſs be it ſpoken, the beauty and benefit of it is never more ſeen and found then in times of publick Calamity and days of Vengeance; Conſider what our Saviour ſpeaks in *Luke* 21. 25. *And there ſhall be ſignes in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the earth diſtreſſe of Nations, with perplexity, the Sea and the Waves roaring, Mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth; For the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken,* &c. When theſe things begin to come to paſſe, what then? then, even then look you up and lift up your heads, for your Redemption draws nigh. The acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of Vengeance of our God are joyned together, *Eſai.* 61. When Vengeance comes upon the Wicked, then is God *in ſuo bene placito*, then is he in his fulleſt complacency The Pſalmiſt tells us, *Pſalm* 58 *The Righteous ſhall rejoyce when he ſeeth the vengeance,*

Iſa. 66.

Esa. 66. 5. *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, let the Lord be glorified*: but for what I marvel, what for hating their Brethren and casting them out? *O bona causa*; But what follows, he shall appear for your joy and they shall be ashamed, my servants saith the Lord *shall eat and ye shall be hungry, my servants shall drink but ye shall be thirsty, my servants shall rejoyce but ye shall be ashamed, my servants shall sing for joy of heart but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall houle for vexation of spirit*, chap. 65. verse 13. When was it that those *Cælicolæ*, the much people in heaven voiced out their Hallelujahs, and the four and twenty Elders consorted with them and said, *Amen Hallelujah*; but when the smoak of *Babylon* and her Torments ascended for ever and ever, and upon the beholding of which, the Kings and Merchants of the earth; Cry out, alasse! alasse! that Great City *Babylon* that mighty City, for in one hour is thy judgment come. It is as I hinted to you before a day of Judgment and terrible appearance of God amongst us in the way of Pestilence, and what would we have God to do, would we have him always to be silent and sit still in heaven, as one that takes no Cognisance of what is done on earth, and not sensible in the least of all the provocations wherewith he hath been provoked to his face from day to day; such apprehensions and athiestical conceits have possessed the minds of others of old, *Ezek.* 8 *verse* 12. *for they say, the Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth*;

The like we have in *Pſalm* 94. *verſe* 6. 7. They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thy heritage, *Yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee: neither ſhall the God of* Jacob *regard it.* Would ye have the Mighty and moſt holy *Jehovah* ſo to un-God himſelf (with Reverence be it ſpoken) and ſo to carry as if he had caſt off the Government of the World, and regarded not which end went forward, or as if he were now grown old and impotent diſabled for mannaging affairs as formerly, or ſuch a God as *Elijah*, in way of holy Sarcaſm and Scoffingly propounds *Baal* to be 1 *King.* 18. *v.* 27. *Cry aloud for he is a God either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a Journey, or peradventure he ſleepeth and muſt be awaked*; ſurely there is no gracious ſpirit in the World can endure, that the moſt bleſſed God ſhould be under ſuch reproach and ſcorn, but rather that he ſhould awake up, and ſhew himſelf in a way of vindication of his own name and glory, which is better then all the Angels and men in the world. The Church of old hath made lively diſcovery of an excellent ſpirit to ſuch a purpoſe, *Pſalm* 94. *verſe* 1. *O Lord God to whom Vengeance belongs, O God to whom vengeance belongs, ſhew thy ſelf.* Eſai. 60. *verſe* 1, 2. *Oh that thou wouldeſt rent the heavens, that thou wouldeſt come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy preſence, As when the melting fire burneth, the fire cauſeth the waters to boyle,* and wherefore all this? mark what follows, *to make thy name known to thine adverſaries, that the nations may tremble at thy preſence.* And let God alone to plead his own cauſe, be

be ſure he will look to his name and glory. mark what he ſpeaks by the prophet, *Pſalm* 50. v. 21. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf: but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes.* So likewiſe the Prophet *Iſaiah chap.* 42. *ver.* 13, 14. *The Lord ſhall go forth as a mighty man, he ſhall ſtir up jealouſie like a man of War: he ſhall cry, yea, roar, he ſhall prevail againſt his enemies. I have long time holden my peace, I have been ſtill, and refrained my ſelf: Now will I cry like a travelling woman, I will deſtroy and devour at once.* So that a man ſhall ſay, verily there is a reward for the righteous, he that ſeeth cauſe ſo to ſay, ſhall ſee a like cauſe to ſay, as verily, there is a reward for the wicked; even as verily *as there is a God that judgeth the Earth, Pſalm* 58. 11. We have ſomwhat of Juſtification hereof at this day, among our ſelves the ſword of Peſtilence (as I ſaid before,) is wakened, and the terrible God is cauſing his terrour to manifeſt it ſelf: the great men of the earth do reckon it to their honour to appear very formidable and dreadfull, and to raiſe up and cauſe their terrour to be known in their Dominions, and to thoſe that are under their Government. We finde in *Ezekiel chap.* 32. That five or ſix times in few verſes, it is thus expreſſed, *Such and ſuch cauſed their terrour in the Land of the living, but at laſt themſelves were brought to the pit, and ſlain with the Sword, uncircumciſed as they were, and while they had their ſword; under their heads they had their iniquities upon their bones,* verſe 27. and then this ac-

count is given of them, the terrible God who somtimes manifests himself terrible to Kings and Princes and Nations, he comes in speaking thus, *verse* 32. *I have caused my terrour*, as if he had said, they have taken their times and turns to shew themselves terrible, and I will take my time with them and make it appear, that I can cause as much terrour as any of them. God can carry and act as men do, excepting their sinfull actings; as in the 18. *Psalm, With the mercifull thou wilt shew thy self mercifull, with the upright thou wilt shew thy self upright, with the pure thou wilt shew thy self pure, with the meek thou wilt shew thy self meek, with the humble thou wilt shew thy self humble; But with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward, and with the terrible thou wilt shew thy self terrible.* The Lord carries at this day as if he had seen and heard somthing; I referr to that expression in *Zechariah chap.* 9. *v.* 8. when the Lord speaks by the Prophet thus, *I will encamp about my house*, &c. *for now have I seen with mine eyes.* Surely God hath seen somwhat that is not very gratefull to him, for it is now more then the burthen of the word of the Lord; no, Its the burden of the wrath and judgment of the Lord, not in the denunciation of it, but in the execution of it: I have signified in part already, what is the proper work for us all in such a day, and I am now turnd upon the same point again; And what if it be as of old, according to what the Prophet *Esaiah* speaks; *Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.* You my dear Friends and others with you will not be offended,

offended, and as for others be they who they will that are curious, captious, and critical, if any ſuch ſhould come to the view hereof. If they be not pleaſed I paſſe not nor ſhall I be diſpleaſed; I am at a point, I'le trouble them as little as I can, and it may be never more in this kind: If you and the reſt to whom this is intended, accept and reap any benefit by what I have performed for your ſake in a paræneticall and perſwaſory way, it is enough for me, I have my ayme. Our common work beſides other is to pray, but for what? That God would remove his heavy ſtroake, true; but with all, that he would ſanctifie it, and do us much good by it, knowing that Covenant aſſiſtion and Judgments ſanctified, are better much better then common mercies: Pray that God would purge away our Droſſe, and take away our Tinn, what there is of droſſe in point of Doctrine, Diſcipline and Worſhip, and Morals; and in our own hearts, that he would purge all this away: Pray that the Plaiſter may lye on till in ſome meaſure it hath eaten out proud excreſcences: Fruit of Judgments is better then freedom from them. There are it ſeems ſome hopes at the preſent, while I am Writing, that the ſtrength of the ſtorm is over; that there will be a great abatement this week, and ſo for the future: And its ſaid, that our buſie Aſtrologers, who I wiſh do not make too bold with God encourage this hope. I would ſay as *Jeremiah* ſpeaks concerning the veſſels of the Temple, when *Hananiah* the ſon of *Azur* the Prophet which was in *Gibeon*, ſpake unto

unto him in the house of the Lord, in the presence of all the people saying; *I have broken the yoak of the King of* Babylon, *and in two full years will I bring again to this place all the vessels of the Lords house that* Nebuchadnezar *King of* Babylon *took away from this place, and carried them to* Babylon *&c. Jeremiah* said to *Hananiah* in the presence of the Priests and in the presence of all the people, even the Prophet *Jeremiah* said, *Amen, the Lord do so, the Lord perform the word which thou hast prophesied, Jer.* 27. So would I say upon such suggestions concerning an abatement & Cessation of the judgment upon us, even so Amen, the Lord perform this word. But see well to it, how, and upon what termes we and the Plague part, it may prove *maxima Dei ira* the greatest wrath of God, for God not to be angry, that is, not to make manifest his anger. God punisheth most severely when he refuseth to punish, as in *Hosea* 4. *I will not punish your Daughters when they commit Whordom, Medicus cum definit curare desperat,* its an argument that the Physitian hath little or no hope of the Patient when he gives over the Cure, it may prove the greatest Judgment to have a Judgment removed; and let us be wise and take our Saviours counsel given to the diseased man, *John* 5. *Sin no more least a worse thing come unto thee,* Judgment and punishments of the second or third edition, or of a second or third prolation, may prove seaven times more pressingly burthensome; pray we then that God and we may be friends before we and his Judgments part, by occasion of the sad

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ſtroak under which we lye. There is a monthly Faſt appointed by His Majeſties Authority, and it is well that ſuch a courſe is taken, in order to the removal of the Judgment which is now incumbent upon us. Faſting and Praying is a proper expedient for ſuch a purpoſe of Gods appointing, and therefore it ſhould be of mans, becauſe of Gods; but let us take heed that our faſting be ſuch as God requires, not a faſting for Strife and Debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſs. Is it ſuch a Faſt *Vaith* the Lord, *that I have choſen a day for a man to afflict his ſoul, is it to bow down his head as a Bulruſh, wilt thou call this a faſt, an acceptable day to the Lord.* Let there be a putting our ſelves in a due poſture and know that it well becomes us to appear before God, with earth upon our heads, with ropes about our necks, with ſackcloath upon our Loyns, and ſo to lie in the duſt before him. And for the publick Preachers in whoſe hands is the management of the work, I would beſeech them to look to two or three things; Firſt, that they would cry aloud and not ſpare; that they would lift up their Voices like Trumpets and ſhew the Inhabitants of *England* their tranſgreſſions, and wherein they have exceeded; that they would drive impartially, ſparing none; that they would lift up a Standard againſt that Athieſme which threatneth to invade the Nation as a Flood; That they would not give ſtones inſtead of bread; that they would not fall upon that falacie in Logick, to put *Non cauſam pro cauſa*, touching the Peſtilence; That they

they would not be like the Prophets of Old, who saw vaine and foolish things for the people, not discovering their Iniquity to turn away their Captivity, but seeking for them false burthens, and causes of Banishment and of Destruction and of desolation as the Prophet speaks, *Lam.* 2.v.14. But that they would make it their main design to promote the power of Godliness and a real Reformation, according to the word of God and example of the best reformed Churches, and that Primitive Discipline, which as the *Common Prayer Book* expresses, it were much to be wished that it were Restored, might come in Power. The Long Parliament were driving something to that purpose, but could not bring about their design. Oh that now Magistrates and Ministers would unanimously set themselves, to see if they can perform better then they did, So as that the people of the Nation may be brought to worship God *Unohumero*, with one shoulder, then shall we not need to be forced by Acts of Parliament *to come to Church*. Those whom they call Phanaticks, will then flee as Doves to their windows, flock as sheep to their foulds, come by shoals (that to be sure) you will not be able to keep them out. The Apostle tells us, *that the great God calls upon all men every where to Repent*; Oh that that might be our work, and that we might second our Humiliation with a real Reformation, that we may put away the Iniquity of our hearts and hands, that we may spit out the sweet morsels which we have rowl'd so long under our tongue, and held so fast between

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our teeth, that we would each of us ſtudy our own iniquity and quit it; and let the Preachers themſelves look to it, that they be lively examples thereof, then may we Faſt and Pray with hope and confidence, that God will hear and anſwer, and appeare for our help. And would not thoſe who are lookt upon as Fanaticks, would not they comply with others in this cauſe. There are of them that though they have not felt the Laſhing of the Scorpions, have not had the ſowereſt looks, the ſevereſt frowns, and ſharpeſt rebukes, yet have had none of the friendlieſt aſpects; yet even thoſe are free in their ſpirits to comply with the Cauſe of Humiliation; and I hope that the people of the Nation will not think that they have wiſhed evil to them, or deſired the woful day. *Jeremiah* was forbidden to pray for the people of his time, and he was ſomtimes in deep and dreadfull imprecations againſt them, whether out of paſſion and perturbation of ſpirit by means of deep provocations from them, or prompted thereunto by divine inſtinct, I diſpute not, but theſe can & do deprecate with others the preſent Judgments; and can ſay with *Samuel*, God forbid that we ſhould ſin in ceaſing to pray for you. We are and count it our duty to be deeply ſenſible as of Gods diſhonour, ſo of the Nations preſent Calamity and Sufferings.

We are fellow Country-men, we are fellow Subjects, in the Nations Peace, we have had Peace; but may we not queſtion, whether other of our brethren deſire or care for our Prayers, but

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hope to do the work themſelves without our help; even ſo ſay we, *So there be but found a* Moſes *to ſtand in the Gap, an* Aaron *with his Cenſer in his hand to ſtand between the living and the dead it matters not, ſo there be a man to turn away the wrath of God, let him be who he will we will rejoyce.*

My dear Friends I purpoſed a ſhorter come off then thus, not to draw out a Line to this length, but ſo it proves and I make proof of your patience; and if your patience be not quite ſpent, I will add ſome few words more, and we will cloſe up all. I told you before of the Earl of *Marlboroughs* letter, I have yet further to ſignifie to you, that I lately met with another paper bearing Mr. *Richard Baxters* name, a large ſheet woven by him not to be a winding ſheet for mens bodyes, but rather a ſpiritual winding ſheet for their ſouls, to wind them into God and into heaven, if you will you may reckon it to be a Penitential ſheet, woven and wrought to winde poor ſouls into Faith and Repentance, and ſo to Glory: Since that ſheet I have met with other papers of his, which referr partly to the Godly, partly to the wicked, to one and other principally, with reſpect unto this Contagious Peſtilence; in all which he expreſſes much of the good will of him that dwelt in the buſh: Good man of a Piouſly publick ſpirit, wiſhing well to all, hurt to none if he could help it, would have none to Periſh but all to come to Repentance and ſo to Glory, having it ſeems a ſtrong confidence (as well he may) be the numbers never ſo great, of Perſons that get the Poſſeſſion of

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the Kingdome before himself, he shall not be prejudiced in the least, as to his own interest therein; and I must ingeniously confesse thus much to you, that those sweet and savory Papers of his, which like so many Boxes of Precious Ointment broken open, have filled the City and Country with such an Odoriferous and Fragrant smell, as hath much refreshe the nostrills of many, gave me the occasion to appear in this way, and with him to prosecute the same design of promoting some benefit, refreshment, and comfort, especially to Persons Visited with the Pestilence; yet withal having an eye to others that they might be prepared for it, and corroborated against the fears of it, rolling themselves upon God in the way of a holy confidence; and this is that which with your patience I would apply my self unto: First of all, I would perswade you, and all my Christian Brethren and Friends, not to be over-fearful of the Plague; it is good to have an awe upon our spirits, and a trembling frame of heart in the Presence of our Father, when the Rod is in his hand, and he exercising his severity upon those that are in his great Family; but be not too much of a dispondent spirit, as too many are who fear and fly: I shall not now dispute the case concerning removing into the Country, how farr it may be lawfull, how farr not; who may be allowed to provide for their safety that way who not; others have performed that, and for my part I have favourable and friendly thoughts concerning such as do, onely I would have them to consider, that

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there is no flying from God; so *David*, *Psal.* 139. verse 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whether shall I fly from thy presence; if I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, & dwell in the uttermost parts in the Sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me; if I say, surely the darkness shall cover me: even the night shall be light about me.* We are further to know that these Arrows of Pestilence are guided by a divine hand, and are not sent out at a venture at random as the *Syrians* were and *Jehus*, which were directed to *Ahabs* breast, and *Jehorams* back; they are levelled in wisdome and judgment, according to the Counsel of God, he smites whom he pleases, he spares whom he pleases, and both the *Numerus numerans* and the *Numerus numeratus* are with him; It is good therefore to rolle our selves upon God, and to trust him with our lives, and souls, and all our concernments, not fearing the fear of wicked men, but sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts, & making him our fear. As touching the Plague, it is in it self and in the nature of it a formidable disease, as might be manifested in sundry respects, as I said, but it is ordered by a divine hand, you may be infected with it, it may be not; if it be so you may recover, its not necessary you should dy, it proves not mortal to all; its thought by many of the learned, that King *Hezekiah* was sick of that Disease, and yet he recovered and lived many years after, and we have proof of it at this very day, by means used; di-

[illegible] kept from the Grave and raised up again; and among others whom God is pleased to make use of as instruments in his hand to such a purpose, though they be but few; blessed of God be our worthy Doctor *Gaks*, who is eminently active, even to the hazard of himself and Family; for the good and benefit of such as are seized with the Disease, having a freenesse of spirit, to apply himself as much to the Poor, as to those of a higher rank; and blessed be God not without successe, as is well known to many of us at this day; but grant it that the Disease prove Mortal, and we should fall by the hand of it; if all be well between God and our own souls, if we be a pardoned people, justified by the blood of the everlasting covenant, it shall be well with us to all eternity; and what if you go to heaven in a storm, the Mariner thinks not the worse of the heaven because a tempest hurled him into it; heaven will be never the worse nor lesse acceptable to us, nor we the lesse welcome to it, though we come thither by the means of the Plague: As for such whose Families are now Visited, whether Rich or Poor, Young, or Old, One or Others, I would in more special manner make my Application to them. Worthy Mr. *Baxter* hath prevented me and performed worthily, and he hath given out wholsome Advice and Directions, Methodizing matters that do more especially concern persons in that condition; I would second him in a more General way, and what I shall now in the closing up of my Letter offer out,

with respect unto Visited Families and Persons; I could heartily wish that it might be abstracted from the rest of my Letters, and transmitted to the said Families and Persons; and why might not some well affected persons that have a larger Portion of the World then others of their neighbours, be at so much cost to procure, together with Mr. *Baxters* Papers, that which now I send them with, and transmit them unto such Families and Persons. I have observed, that our Mountebanks can issue out their Papers, and scatter them up and down, that there may be a general cognizance taken of such and such Sovereign Antidotes and Medicaments, as may be beneficial to persons, to whom such Medicaments are most proper, and may prove most beneficial; and this which now I have to express, is the extract which I wish might be made: I would commission such a paper to say, *Peace be unto this House, and be sure if the Son or Daughter of Peace be there, the Peace shall rest upon it, notwithstanding the Plague be in it;* and whether it come as a tryal or as a punishment, I would advise them to bid it welcome, accept it, kiss the Rod, and the hand that holds it, drink the cup, which though it may be bitter, yet may prove wholsome and not poisonous in the least, hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it, quarrel not with it, but fall under it, study you to please God in what you do or suffer, and that God may please you in what he orders out, and all will be well. I would aske you concerning your Souls, and Spiritual Conditions; have

you not minded God hitherto, nor acquainted your selves with him, and the Mysteries of his Will; things that concern your Eternal Peace; have you not yet believed, repented; set to it now, and make it your business, you may have but a little time to spend in the world, improve it to as good purpose as you can, let not a minute run out to waste; the nearer you are to your journeys end, make the more haste that your work may not be to do, when you have no time left to do it in; knowing that there is no Believing, Repenting, self-Humbling, and making peace with God; No, such Work in the Grave whither you are going, be deeply humbled for your neglect of Hearing, Reading, Praying, and other Duties of Godliness, and now cry mightily, urge God with his Attributes, and plead thus; Lord thou art stiled a Father of Lights, and wilt thou not send light into my dark soul; thou art the God of all Grace, and shall I dye in a graceless condition; thou gavest Christ, and that of thine own free accord, when there was no moveing of thee in the least to such a purpose, and he hath shed his blood pacified thy wrath, satisfied thy justice, brought in everlasting righteousness, and is now at the right hand to make Intercession for poor sinners and shall I that now cry for him, fly to him, be never the better for him, not one drop of his blood to purge my conscience; onely by the way let me Animadvert upon that which is the common apprehension and expression of men, that one drop of Christs Blood was suffici-

ent to save a world; for my part I am not clear in that it must be heart blood, life blood that must be shed by him to make an Attonment: but to direct your proceed in the way of your Plea, Lord thou hast given me a natural life and breath, and wilt thou not give me spiritual life and breath; I have the natural senses of hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling, and so forth; and Lord shall I be wholy a stranger to spiritual senses, these things am not I able to preform in my own behalf, by my own power; Oh put forth thine, make me such as thou wouldst have me to be, and I shall be such; it is said of *Abraham*, thou foundst him faithfull, and of *David*, thou foundst him a man after thine own heart, thou wouldst never have found them so, if thou hadst not made them so, make me such and thou shalt find me such; thy grace is as sufficient to pardon, and sanctifie and renew me, as ever it was for any poor sinner in the World; If I dye, and damne, and perish, there is no profit in my blood, the dead praise thee not, the damned will not nor can; If I perish I shall never love thee and honour thee; If thou wilt save me, I shall be a lasting Monument of freest love and richest Grace and Mercy. Oh then Magnifie thy Mercy upon me, and let me not be Fuel for the burning, but Timber for the building; yet let me further drive and deal with you, and use my uttermost to fasten my nails in you; you are humane creatures, oh see that you be new creatures, you are a part of the first Creation that is wofully degenerated

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and defaced, see that you be a part of the second Creation which is performed in Christ Jesus, in whom all Gods acts of Grace are performed; you have natural understandings, pray that God would give you spiritual understandings; *David* fetched an argument from this consideration, that Gods hand had made him, fashioned him, and urged in the strength thereof: *Oh give me understanding that I may keep thy Testimonies, Psal.* 119. You have bodies, but do you not consider that you have souls that are infinitely more to be valued then your bodyes, the losse whereof, the whole world will not countervail; you live a natural life, but do not you know that there is a spiritual life which is infinitely better, look to live that life; you eat and drink daily for the body, there is a spiritual meat and drink provided, which your souls have as much need of, as your bodyes have of the Perishing food, oh make out after that; You are carefull to cloath your bodies, and shall your souls be naked; You prize and study to keep and maintain your outward liberty, spiritual liberty is far better, and will you please your selves in spiritual bondage to sin and the Devil, oh make out after this spiritual liberty, knowing that if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed; You are carefull to maintain your bodily health, and is it good that you should have sick souls; let me aske you, will you love darknesse rather then light, sickenesse rather then health, bondage rather then liberty, death rather then life, your disease bet-

ſer then your Cure, your Plague better then your plaiſter, will you choſe rather to be in the hand of a wounding, killing Devil, then in the hand of a healing, recovering, curing Chriſt; will you chooſe rather to be damned and go to Hell, then to be eternally ſaved and put into the poſſeſſion of eternal Manſion above; you are ſubject to a bodily Plague which may ſeize you, and it may be hath, know you not there is a worſe Plague, the Plague of the heart, you muſt dye how ſoon you know not; oh look after an intereſt in Chriſt which is the beſt intereſt, look for Faith and free Juſtification, Repentance and Renovation, ſeconded with Real and Univerſal Reformation; get the blood of Chriſt which is the blood of ſprinkling upon your Conſciences, which will purge away your Guilt, bring in Peace, and kill the Worm, which if not killed, will killingly gnaw on you to all Eternity; I ſay again, you muſt dye once, take heed of dying twice; there is a ſecond death and that is the moſt formidable, you muſt dy, but look to this, that death do not kill you, do you kill ſin, and you will kill death too; you muſt dye, but let it be your ſeeing of death as it is ſaid of *Simeon*, *Luke* 2. Let not death ſee you with a Mortifferous killing ſight; you muſt dye, let it be but a caſting of death as the Scripture phraſeth it, let it not devouringly feed on you as it ſhall upon ſome, *Pſalm* 49. Once more you muſt dye, I beſeech you for Gods ſake, for dear Jeſus ſake, for your ſouls ſake, let this be your greateſt care, oh that

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it may be mine as well as yours, see to it that you live before you dye, that you live the life of Grace, before you dye the death of Nature, and then it matters not when, where, how, by what Disease you dye; you shall not dye to dye, but dye to live again, and live to dye no more, but live in the un-interrupted Vision and interminable fruition of him who is the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the onely wise God, the Resurrection and the Life, the I am, the infinite Being, the All in All. Oh my Friends, let Master *Baxters* Counsel and this of mine seconding his, let it be acceptable to you and be not so cruel to your own souls as to neglect such a God, such a Christ, such a Gospel, such a Covenant, and such an Inheritance as is laid up in store for the Saints in Light; who but fools would live without God, without Christ, without Faith and Fear, and forgo him and his Christ to all Eternity, and be eternally miserable with Devils and Damned souls. After you are dead you must have the searchers to view your bodies, be you who you will; be you searchers to your selves and your own Souls, and see to it that there be no spiritual Beaver Spots, or Plague Spots upon you; If any spots, look to it that they be no other then the spots of Gods Children; and if you have spots, look to it that you be not spots, such as *Jude* speaks of; And if the Marks of the Lord Jesus be upon your souls, and not the Mark of the Beast and Dragon, whatever Marks and Spots may be found on your Bodies, they may prove

Marks of Death, but shall never prove the Marks of Hell and Damnation: For my part while I am continued on this side the Grave, and in Praying-work, my earnest Prayer for you all shall be; that though you may be judged according to men in the Flesh, yet you may live according to God in the Spirit; and that though your outward Man perish, that your inward Man may be renewed daily; that though there be a destroying of the outward Man, your Souls may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus.

I have now promised to pray for you, and it is my daily work; but be sure you pray for your selves, and make use of Christs name in your prayers; one'y take heed of testing in a meer Forme as commonly men do, that have learned to say, for Jesus Christs sake do thus and thus; when as (poor souls) in the mean time, they know nothing of Christ, never closed with him in a believing way, never knew any need of him, never had any sense of the burthens of sin pressing heavily on their souls, and so made to cry out after that ease and rest, which he is so willing to afford to poor, burthened and heavy laded souls, Mat. 11. 28. Such poor ignorant ones, Christ may say to them, upon what account do you make use of my name, what hath passed between you and me? you and I are yet to begin our acquaintance together, you know not me, nor I you, what have you then to do to take my name into your lips? This then is that which I would perswade and presse you to, acquaint your

selves

selves with Christ and be at peace, as was the counsel given to *Job*, *chap.* 22. The Father is angry, and there is no coming at him but by the clue son, *Oh kisse the son least he be angry*, as is advised, *Psal.* 2. Kisse him with a kisse of Faith, a kiss of Love, a kiss of Real and Cordial Subjection. Oh do it a spiritual way, as the poor woman the sinner did in a bodily way, but with her heart too, *Luke* 7. Get to the feet of Christ and pray, that if you may not have the kisses of his mouth, you may have the kisses of his feet, hang fast about him, and touch him with a touch of faith. *Mary Magdalin* was bid not to touch him, and Christ gave the reason, *For* (saith he) *I am not ascended.* She doted too much upon his bodily presence, but now he is ascended, touch him and spare not: get you an interest in Christs person, and then use his name and improve it to the utmost, you have his warrant for it, *John* 16. 24. and you may be bold upon it, and this incouragement you have, *That what you aske in his name, the Father will give it.* It is, as a precious, so a prevailing name. The case may so stand with a people, or person, that though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job*, though *Moses* and *Samuel* who were Gods Favourites, very potent, and prevalent with him, yet could not Gods heart be toward such a people or person, nor should they prevail, *Jeremiah* 15. 1. *Ezek.* 14. 14. And it did appear in *Sauls* case, on whose behalf *Samuel* did very passionately intercede but could not prevail, 1 *Sam.* 16. 1. But it was never said by God, nor never shall,

though

though Jesus my Son should stand up and plead in the behalf of such or such a sinner, he should not prevail with me.

This Paper of mine, either in the whole complex, or in the extract, which principally I have wished to you may come, and knock at your doores, and may finde them shut upon you, and you shut up within them, that Friends cannot come to you; If it come, take it in, entertain it friendly; what know you, but Christ who stands at the doore and knocks, may come along with it? Oh, let him be entertained into your Houses, into your Hearts; you will have cause to blesse God to eternity, that ever such a guest came under your Rooфes. And so that your *hora novissima*, prove but *hora salutifera salusfica*, your last hour may prove an hour of salvation: I wish you no more, no better. And now, my Brethren, I had done, but, that one onely thing more is to be done. If this paper should be publisht, as haply it may (but if so, it shall be your act, as much as, if not more then mine: It will be perhaps animadverted upon, and Objected against, I would therefore willingly animadvert upon it my self, and anticipate, prevent what Objections may be made against it.

It may be said first, That for all my time past, I have been quiet, and appeared little in a way of Printing; How comes it to passe that now I appeare?

I Answer, Its true, I have appeared little, very little in this way; two or three things have passed

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in my Name and under my Hand, poore inconsiderable things; yet found good acceptance and incouragement, for such *minutule*: They take up little room, and are had on easie terms, lesse then Twelve pence, I think, will buy them all.

Why may I not appear, when the occasion is so pressing, the Arguments so material, and momentous? The Lion hath roared, who will not tremble? The Lord hath spoken, who can Prophesie? Besides let my maine designe I drive plead for me, which is, *Non ad captandam sed ad experimendam benevolentiam promovendam fidem & restipiscentiam*; not to catch at mans respect and esteem, others know how little I deserve it; and I know it as well as they. My Reverend Brethren can give me my price, and so can I of my self: its low by agreement on all hands; onely I have this to say for my self, I am of a self-discouraging Spirit and disposition; and cannot put forth my self amongst my betters, as some can. I think I have been a little disadvantaged upon that account; but it matters not: And if I be a foole in thus expressing my self, I say, as *Paul*, *Beare with me a little in my folly*: and indeed, bear with me. It may be further said, that I prefix a Title, which the following discourse Answers not, till toward the last: other matters are agitated first, and that that suites the Title, comes up in the rear? To that I say, tis true, but most of the matters held forth, refer to the present sad Providence, and have a tendency, to promote a due improving, and a happy removing of the Plague;

Besides,

Besides; the Title Page signifies that there are sundry other things held forth, besides a Check given to the Plague. One thing more, in Nature (as we say in Schooles) that which is *Primum in intentione*, is *Ultimum in executione*; that which is first in intention and purpose, prove last in execution and performance; why not so here? Again, it may be, you seem to discover a male-contented spirit, with respect to the present Times and Administrations? To that, I say, I am better known, then to be ill affected to Magistratical Government; I have all along pleaded and prested submission to Kings and Magistrates, and such as are in Authority over us, and that for Conscience sake: onely with that the greatest severity might not proceed against such as desiring to act according to a judicious and well informed Conscience, cannot, and that meerly out of tenderneſſe, come up in all circumstantials to answer Magistratical Impositions. I meddle not at all with the Laws and Statutes, but touch with gentleneſſe upon the executive part, and those who are betrusted therewith: who possibly may not act from that calmneſſe and composedneſſe of Spirit, and with that gentleneſſe and tenderner that were to be wished; especially toward such as would be glad with all their hearts to come up to the most full and compleat subjection that is required, and have otherwise learned Christ, then to allow themselves, in any turbulency or Seditiousneſſe of Spirit, any Immoriterousneſſe, and refractorineſſe contrary to the word of God,

and

and inconsistent with a good conscience? If it be said, that I take upon me to deal with persons in the publick Ministry, and others also, and do advise and counsel them; and am I not too busily meddling this way, too much assuming? I say, I have been a publick Preacher as well as they, and I could give account what approbation I have found from such as have been of highest rank in their way, and of their perswasion, but I forbear. And though I am farr, very farr short of their Parts and Abilities, yet I may compare with them for years, being now an aged man, and why may I not be permitted to suggest somewhat to them in a way of Counsel and Advise. *Job* would not despise the Counsel of a Servant: If it be said I plead the cause of meeknesse, and earnestly presse it, but discover a sharp and tart Spirit, &c. I say, that meeknesse and sharpnesse as the occasion may beare not, *adversa*, but may very well consist together: *Moses* and *Paul* were Eminent and most Exemplary for their Meeknes; but yet could be hot and quick, and did as the Cause required, shew themselves men of mettle, full of zeal. And who would not be zealous, very zealous, when Achiesme and Prophaneſs do so impetuously break in upon us as a Flood? When there is so much dishonour done to God, such indignities offered to Christ and his Grace, such a spirit of Malignity and desperate Opposition, made and manifested against the power of Godlinesse. Once more it may be said, I appear too friendly to Fanaticks; I say, there are, that are so called,

that

that are not so indeed: I would the definition of such a one, were genuinely and properly drawn up and given out according to truth, and let them wear the Coat, that is best fits; Let me ever be a Cordial friend to such as fear God, honour the King, minde real godlinesse, and study to expresse the power of it, walk circumspectly, labour to keep Faith and a good Conscience, and their Garments of holy Profession, close about them, clean upon them, not being spotted by the world, that make it their daily care, to walk with God as *Enoch* and *Abraham* did, to approve themselves to Christ, to keep clear of sin, and close to the ways of holiness; making it their design whereothers shall be found to shame and dishonour, they may be found to praise and glory, in the appearing and Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; and such as these the world will hate, Maligne, Persecute, and judge the scum off-scouring of men, so *Paul* and his companions were accounted, 1 Cor. 4. 13. We are made the περικαθαρματα, the *Purgamenta*, the *Excrements*, as *Erasmus* renders the Word. Thus I say the World will count them, and it cannot do no otherwise, blinde, besotted World as it is. But it matters not, God will love them, Christ will own them and honour them, their Consciences will befriend them, and if God love, it matters not who hate; if Christ be for us, it matters not who be against us; if the Scriptures be on our side, it matters not who rise up in opposition; if Conscience be a friend, we need not passe, though the World be our enemy,

and

and all the devils of hell too, as to be sure they will. They are in the saddest condition, that have God, and Christ, and Conscience, and Scriptures against them. I have often thought and said, it were better for a man to have an Army of Ten Thousand men in Battel array against him, then to have one Text of Scripture against him, and so might I say of a Saints Prayer. My Brethren and Friends I have Done, tis a poor Do, such as it is except; I told you in the beginning, *The desire of a man is his kindness*; If I have done any thing tending to the glory of my dearest God, my Sweetest and most Pretious Jesus, any thing that may conduce to the promoting any benefit to your Souls or any other, its enough: Now to him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultlesse before the presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy to the onely wise God our Saviour; be Glory, and Majesty, Dominion, and Power, now and ever, *Amen*.

FINIS.